



Clear Thinking newsletter from Uncommon Knowledge - Issue 68

In this month's Clear Thinking...

1. How a clever wee boy can help you help people quit smoking
2. New online course: How to stop anyone smoking
3. Clear Thinking now fortnightly 'Therapy Techniques' bulletin

How a clever wee boy can help you help people quit smoking

Discover a fundamental principle of human behaviour that makes treating smoking and all addiction so much easier

Sometimes when you talk about quitting smoking to a smoker, you see a look of terror (or defiance!) flit across their features – even if they have explicitly asked for help in quitting.

I had to laugh the other day at a little boy I saw at the Marina. His mum was trying to persuade the little lad, clad in a life jacket he didn't need, to lend it to another little fellow, who did need it. He wasn't having any of it, and she gave up. But a moment after she turned away, didn't the wee lad announce to his mate, "It's too hot to wear this jacket. You can have it!"

This little boy had just given a lovely demonstration of a principle we have to understand when helping people stop smoking.

I'll quit smoking – but only on my own terms!

Coming up with his *own* reason to give up the life jacket, rather than simply 'doing what he was told', instantly gave the little boy a sense of autonomy – something that's vital to all of us.

Similarly, you can't just *tell* someone to stop smoking. After all, smoking is built upon rebellion: the smoker *rebels* against the 'crap day', the missed opportunity, the scare story, the tetchy boss and the attempts of a well-meaning do-gooder to get them to quit, by... having a cigarette.

3 questions that will enlist your smoker's personal autonomy

Smokers know all the reasons why they 'should' quit, of course. And if they've showed up in your consulting room, at least some of these reasons are likely to have influenced them. But it is still vital that they find a *personal* reason to stop smoking that carries weight with them, that goes beyond just 'being a good boy' (or girl).

To get past the 'common sense health advice', I often put questions like this:

- What really inspires you to quit smoking at this point?
- How will you know when you're really ready to stop?
- What will be the best thing about being an ex-smoker for you?

And I always encourage them to answer in as much vivid detail as possible. The richer the sensory experience they evoke for themselves, the more powerfully compelling it gets.

I went to a hypnotherapist and stopped smoking all by myself

The little boy was able to lend his life jacket when he could feel it was *his* choice and *his* idea to do so. When we help people stop smoking, we effectively throw them a life jacket – but it needs to feel right and natural for them to put it on.

How to stop anyone smoking (Early Bird discount ends 6 May!)

If you want to learn more powerful and effective ways to help people stop smoking quickly, sign up to train with me on our new online Smoking Cessation course right now.

This key new course for therapists working to help people quit smoking launches on Wednesday 27 May and you can be one of the first to benefit from the wealth of information, insight and sheer know-how we have put together to help smoking cessation practitioners become even better at what they do.

And if you book your place (only 25 available) before the end of the day tomorrow, you'll get 25% off the course fee.

Here's where to sign up for [how to stop anyone smoking](#) and get the answers to all your questions.

Clear Thinking in your inbox every two weeks!

Hello

Clear Thinking has changed. It will now come every 2 weeks with one article packed with psychological know-how that you can put to use right away. If this doesn't appeal any more, you can bid us farewell by using the Update your details link at the bottom. Do give me a chance to impress you though ;-)

All the best

Mark Tyrrell
Creative Director
Uncommon Knowledge LLP

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